

why it should want a massive offensive conventional and nuclear strike capability. Secondly, who or what are the ostensible targets requiring such national commitment of human, economic, and material resources, to say nothing of the political capital expended in the international community.

The "why" of the clerical regime's military build-up can be answered simply as a normal action in light of the recent war with Iraq. More importantly, however, the upgrading of offensive conventional and future nuclear strike capabilities must be seen in the light of the Mullahs' determination to ensure their survival in the seat of power in Tehran, and more ominously for the future, perhaps to further their political-religious goals elsewhere in the Middle East and North Africa.

The importance of Iran's current rearming and upgrading of fire-power can be measured in terms of its economic cost to the nation. The U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA) estimates that between 1987-91 the clerical regime ruling Iran spent an estimated US\$8-billion in hard currency for weapons imports. At least a similar amount has been spent since 1991 for further purchases of weapons systems. This at a time when the country is experiencing significant economic distress as indicated by the fact that the per capita share of the GNP (i.e. the individual economic worth) has fallen to around \$1,000.

From these bare economic facts, it is apparent that the clerical regime in Tehran is choosing "guns over butter", and, consequently, is perpetuating the economic misery of the Iranian population. Compounding this economic situation is the fact that Iran's external debt is at least US\$40-billion, and given the relatively modest world prices for crude oil, Iran's main foreign currency earner, there is little hope for debt reduction in the foreseeable future. What this simply means is that as the external debt burden grows, the clerics will find it more difficult to acquire credit for domestic needs such as imports of necessary goods and services that are urgently needed to stop the nation's rapidly declining living standards.

Moreover, the great economic burden of the massive arms build-up has serious long term implications for Iran's development of its industrial economic base, notably, the petro-chemical infrastructure. Authorities estimate that Iran needs US\$5-billion for repairs, replacement parts and maintenance of its petroleum extraction and processing equipment and facilities, and an additional US\$1-billion for the maintenance of attendant petro-chemical equipment. If this investment in the petroleum infrastructure is delayed or slowed down, it is likely that within 15 years, the entire infrastructure will collapse, bringing about economic catastrophe.

The salient question is at what cost to the welfare and well-being of the Iranian people, and at what cost to the goodwill and economic credibility within the international community is the clerical leadership willing to expend for illusory and self-destructive goals of religious fanaticism and domestic and international terrorism.

THE LIKELY TARGETS OF THE CLERICS' NUCLEAR POLICY

The second salient question, given the above discussion regarding the excessive level of rearmament effort, is, who, what and where are the targets of the arms build-up. If one surveys the current Middle Eastern political, religious and social environment, it becomes evident that there is an array of differences that are not in accord with the clerics' concept of religious "fundamentalism" and its attendant political and social ways of life. These range from Israel's inherent

Judaic nature, Egyptian, and Syrian political secularism, Saudi Arabia's Sunni sectarianism, the economic per capita wealth of the Persian Gulf States, the Turkish security links to the U.S., and the overall instability of the former Soviet Caucasus and Central Asian Republics and Afghanistan.

It is well within reason that the clerical leadership in Tehran may perceive some, if not all, of these differences as a threat to its "way of life" and ideology. Perhaps they also see them as targets of opportunity for some future date, when through armed threats and other coercive means, they look forward to imposing their hegemony, and forcing them to accede to their religious and political ideology.

The clerics' support of political terrorism in Lebanon, Egypt, Sudan, Algeria and elsewhere lends credence to their once far-fetched claim of converting the world of Islam to Khomeinism. In light of their actions and pronouncements, this indeed may be their first step on the road to achieving their avowed goals.

The nuclear strategic doctrine of the Islamic Republic was formulated by "The Strategic Islamic Research Center" headed by Hojatol Islam Khoeniha. Following are the main conclusions and goals of the Center which were reached in a secret meeting in May 1991:

1. After the collapse of communism, Islam is the only force and Islamic Republic the only leader and supporter of the liberation of the oppressed masses.
2. Iran will naturally be on a collision course with the U.S., and must consider the U.S. a real threat to the Islamic world.
3. Iran needs to develop nuclear power and prestige.

The result of this meeting, which was never publicized, should not be taken lightly. Nuclear weapons can be either the guarantor of state, or a threat to the whole region and survival of the country itself. The difference lies in the responsibility, wisdom, and the sophistication of the leadership, and the nuclear strategy it adopts. In the hands of responsible leaders, one can assume that nuclear weapons would not be used unless absolute survival of the country was at stake. In the case of the current clerical leadership in Tehran, it could present a real threat.

Like the United States, Israel is seen as the "Satan": the extreme negation of all that is held religiously and politically sacred to the clerics in Tehran. Moreover, the Islamic shrines in Jerusalem must be "redeemed". The clerics' success in this effort would most certainly evoke the Moslem masses to respond to its cause and jihad: a tide which none of the Middle Eastern States could withstand.

It is the opinion of many specialists that Israel is the lynch-pin for Iranian religious/political hegemony in the Middle East. Others point to the clerics' claim of the right to administer the holy shrines in Mecca and Medina. Another important target is likely to be Egypt which is already facing very serious challenges to its political and economic infrastructure from radical Moslem fundamentalists. The long arm of Khomeinism is most definitely felt in Egypt through the clerics' financial, material and moral support for the Egyptian religious radicals. The fall of the Egyptian Government would be a world-wide political event, and would pose a grave threat to the security of Israel and Saudi Arabia, and, most likely, would destabilize Jordan and Lebanon. The military assets of Egypt in the hands of radical extremists is difficult to contemplate for the United States and its Allies; for Iran, it would be a bounty worth all its effort and cost.

COMMENTS ON IRANIAN LEADERSHIP

Finally, in our assessment, the current clerical leadership in Tehran seems to be totally incapable of comprehending the dangerous consequences of their course of action. The clerics seem oblivious to the historic lessons of this century. All those who overreached their power paid dearly. Irresponsible policies and actions by irrational and despotic leaders brought untold hardship and misery on the civilian population. The overreaching of military power by the clerics in Iran could bring about the destruction of the Iranian nation. It should be made clear that the imperatives of Iran's security needs are recognized, and the bravery and dedication of its Armed Forces in defending the nation is lauded. It is our belief that the course of military expansion exceeds the requirements for defense of the frontiers against any adversary for the foreseeable future. The course pursued can only lead to the destruction of the patriotic Armed Forces needlessly.

In order to prevent the dangers of irresponsible military expansion and adventurism, we categorically support the replacement of the current regime with one dedicated to democratic principles well-grounded in the realities of the international security environment and balance of power concept. Furthermore, we insist that a new regime must have the support, respect and confidence of the Iranian people as well as that of the international community.

First and foremost on its agenda must be the well-being of the people, and guarantees for individual freedom and human rights. Along with economic security, it must work to ensure their physical as well as national security. These can be achieved by reversing the current aggression-oriented arms build-up and support for terrorism. Instead, the new leadership must be dedicated to, and must take an active role in promoting regional and world peace.

WAS CONGRESS IRRESPONSIBLE? THE VOTERS HAVE SAID YES

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, before contemplating today's bad news about the Federal debt, let us do that little pop quiz again: How many million dollars are in \$1 trillion? When you arrive at an answer, bear in mind that it was Congress that ran up a debt now exceeding \$4.8 trillion.

To be exact, as of the close of business Monday, April 3, the total Federal debt—down to the penny—stood at \$4,873,480,746,464.74—meaning that every man, woman, and child in America now owes \$18,499.82 computed on a per capita basis.

Mr. President, again to answer the pop quiz question, How many million in a trillion? There are a million million in a trillion; and you can thank the U.S. Congress for the existing Federal debt exceeding \$4.8 trillion.

TRIBUTE TO DICK REINERS

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, today I want to take a moment to commemorate the long and distinguished life of my dear friend, Richard H. Reiners, an outstanding American, who passed away earlier this year.

Dick Reiners was born September 24, 1907, on a small farm east of Lennox,